

THE ORANGE-BOX

THOUGHTS OF A SOCIALIST
PROPAGANDIST



[Photo by Miell & Miell Boscombe]

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ONE SHILLING NET

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

*For the sake of brevity the word "man" is
often used to include woman. In no case does
the word "woman" include man.*

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TO ORDINARY PEOPLE
WHO HAVE NOT MUCH TIME
TO READ BIG BOOKS THIS LITTLE BOOK IS DEDICATED,
IN THE HOPE THAT IT MAY PERCHANCE
HELP THEM TO PLAY THEIR PART
IN THE COMMONWEALTH
WHICH IS TO BE

THE ORANGE-BOX

I

FOREWORD

THE NEED FOR PROPAGANDA.

WHY the orange-box has become the synonym for propaganda one hardly knows, for while it is true that a great deal of open-air speaking has been done from boxes, used as street-corner pulpits, orange-boxes are inclined to be frail, and a propagandist weighty in figure probably preferred a box made of sterner stuff. However, boxes of various kinds have been used by Socialists for a generation, and in these encouraging days our minds go back with gratitude to the countless men and women who, in crowded city or remote hamlet, have stood at street corners, or in any open space available, and given out to their hearers the message of the hope of a future in which mutual understanding and goodwill should run like a thread of gold through our social life.

The growth of the Labour Party could not have been so rapid if it had not been for the numberless open-air meetings which were held in days when neither finance nor facilities for halls permitted of any other meetings.

Now that Labour has attained to office, it is sometimes suggested that the days of propaganda are over. "Pro-

paganda has had its day ; it is now time to get down to solid constructive work," it is said. "The time for talking is over ; the time for action has come."

While it is undeniably true that it is of the utmost importance that schemes should be planned out in the minutest detail, it is a mistake to think that propaganda is therefore unnecessary. On the contrary, it is more necessary than ever, though changing conditions will call for corresponding changes in the type and methods of propaganda, so that it may be suited to the present stage in our history.

Before a Government can carry out any desired reform two things are necessary :

1. The creation of an atmosphere in the country favourable to the new idea.
2. The embodiment of the idea in concrete form.

The first is the work of the propagandist ; the second the work of the statesman and technical expert.

A Labour Government, with a very small Press and a large and critical opposition, is dependent in a very special way upon the propaganda of the platform, and it is with this particular work that this book will mainly deal.

It is impossible, even if it were desirable, for the majority of people to be interested in political questions to the exclusion of everything else. There are minorities keenly opposed to, or definitely in favour of, any proposed measure ; but the fate of that measure depends upon the great mass of non-political voters, who have little time or inclination for prolonged and intensive study of a political issue. They tend to have a vague fear of new methods and ideas. They are suspicious of social changes. It is the work of the propagandist to make the new idea familiar, by explanation, discussion and repetition, until that intangible but formidable distrust

gives place to an atmosphere of confidence, which enables legislation not only to be placed upon the statute-book, but to take its place in the life of the nation.

The word "propaganda" might be defined as the presentation of facts for the purpose of influencing the thoughts and actions of others. The influence of reiteration in itself is enormous. Advertising, which is a form of propaganda, would not pay were it not for the fact that people tend to believe a thing if told often enough that it is true. The dear old lady who said that she really must try Somebody's soap because all the advertisements spoke so well of it makes us smile, but if we are not all like that old lady as far as soap is concerned, we are still akin to her as far as something or other is concerned. People have learned perhaps to inquire into the sources of the soap advertisements, but they have not yet learned to inquire closely into the sources of other forms of propaganda. Macaulay's wonderful parable of the Brahmin priest, who allowed himself to be convinced that the mongrel dog before his eyes was in reality a fine sheep because he was told that it was by three rogues, apparently independent witnesses, but in reality in league with each other, is terribly up to date. The burglar who knew himself to be guilty at the beginning of his trial, but who, after hearing the able speech of his counsel, was convinced of his own innocence, has a tragic counterpart in the unemployed man, who, homeless and propertyless, without even the right to labour for his livelihood, believes that the Labour Party is going to take away his "private property" because so many speakers and papers have told him so.

If anyone believes that it is possible to exaggerate the power of propaganda, it is only necessary to remember the effect of war propaganda in each country during the 1914-1918 war.

Propaganda is not only misleading when it is deliberately untrue, but it may be very misleading because of

the bias and colour given to facts by perfectly sincere people.

The self-same occurrence may react quite differently upon the same audience according to the manner in which it is presented.

In some far-off district a man is shot. If the person relating that incident looked upon the man's death as the execution of a criminal of whom the world was well rid, the chances are that his audience would think of it in the same way. If, on the other hand, the person looked upon it as the murder of a high-souled patriot, the chances are that his audience would so consider it. Probably both points of view would be far from the truth. The occurrence, studied in an unbiased manner, would most likely emerge as neither a foul murder nor yet a desirable execution. It might be found that it was the natural and inevitable consequence of a long series of events. The dead man would be found to be neither saint nor criminal, but an ordinary man caught in the tide of unique events.

It may be contended that the Socialist propagandist is doing harm by presenting a biased case. The judgment of his audience is unduly influenced by having facts presented from a "working class" point of view. This is a perfectly legitimate criticism if facts *are* presented exclusively from any "point of view," whether "working class" or otherwise. A fleeting advantage may apparently be gained by putting one side of a case, but effective building work is not done by this method.

The most helpful speaker is not the one who says, "This is the truth," but the speaker who, having himself carefully weighed and thought out a question, sifting all available evidence, is able to put it before his hearers so that they are led to say, "Why, this is the truth."

Second-hand thinking does not build up a new society on very firm foundations, even if the thoughts are good thoughts. It is so much more important for people to

see that a thing is so than for them to be *told* that it is so, even by the most truthful and conscientious person.

Until the nation learns to weigh and judge for itself it will be the prey of the unscrupulous propagandist.

The chief aim of the Socialist propagandist is not to "advertise" Socialism, not to stampede people into blindly voting for a Socialist Government, desirable as it is that they should do so; our aim is pre-eminently to make people understand what Socialism is and why it is the natural heir to Capitalism, and if that cannot be accomplished in its entirety, we can at least hope to get the nation into a frame of mind which will predispose it to give a fair trial to the reforms and changes which are brought before it for judgment.

OUR TASK.

The nature of our propaganda will be determined by our idea of the nature of our task. We have to remember that, while the problem of our fathers was to get power for a powerless people, our problem is to persuade the people to use the power they have, and use it in the best way. The solution of the problems of one age produces the problems of the next. Just because the passing generation has solved by wireless and aeroplane the problem of space, the coming generation is faced by the problem of gigantic international adjustments.

When Moses got the Children of Israel free he had to begin to lead them to the Promised Land. It did not take him very long to force Pharaoh to let them go, but it took him a long time to prepare them to live in their new country, and, in fact, he died before he could accomplish the task. To strike the shackles from the ankles of the slave is but the beginning of the story, for the same action which strikes off the shackles of slavery fastens on the shackles of freedom, which are so much heavier and so much more difficult to manage.

To intimidate Pharaoh is one thing, to educate his freed slaves quite another. When a nation, or a class, or a sex shakes off the yoke of its oppressor it does not end its problems; it begins for the first time to face them. An enslaved nation obeys, an enslaved class obeys, an enslaved sex obeys; it does not need to think. But freedom brings the responsibility of choice and the necessity of learning to order one's life.

If we dared to generalize, we might say that we have to learn to live in crowds and yet preserve individuality. We have to discriminate between restriction and tyranny; we have to learn to submit to the limitations which any association with others brings and yet preserve personal liberty; in short, we have to develop the community idea.

The death penalty is still in vogue in this country for people who murder persons; there is no adequate penalty inflicted on those who murder words.

The beautiful word "community" has been almost killed by its misuse in the past. We have heard so much of this mysterious community against which all those who ask for bread in return for their labour offend. This community can, apparently, only be served by a mass of underpaid, under-educated people, who must give of their strength and cunning, asking little in return. This community can in some way be rich and prosperous while the bulk of its people are poor and wretched. We are tired of the endless talk of duty to the community, the convenience of the community, as if a community could be distinct from the people who form the community. There can be no rightful conception of the duty of the individual to the community without a parallel conception of the duty of the community to the individual. So long as the nation consists of people who have few privileges and many responsibilities, and other people who have few responsibilities and many privileges, there is no true sense of community. Duty

and privilege must go together and balance each other. It is a misconception of this point which has led to so many ill-informed attacks on the Socialists. How often has it been stated that the Socialist wants something for nothing; that he wants workers to be paid well for doing nothing; that he stands for slackness, lack of discipline, inefficiency. Nothing could be more untrue. Because we refuse to believe that low wages and economy are synonymous, and that efficiency can only be obtained through over-fatigue, speeding-up, and kindred methods, it does not follow that we stand for extravagance and inefficiency. On the contrary, we stand for the highest efficiency, and for much more: for a standard of work so high that every ordinary man will be able to work as an artist works. This does not mean that we visualize a time when everyone will paint.

Many people who do not paint pictures are artists, just as many people who do paint pictures are not artists. The man who works as an artist is the man who is interested in his work more than in any circumstance connected with his work. When a man does a thing perfectly, not because the work is going to be examined or because the price will be higher if the work is good, but because he cannot help doing it as perfectly as he can and because it hurts him to see it badly done, he is working as an artist, whether he is planting beans or building a cathedral. It may appear as if this is purely a matter of individual talent and training, and that legislation can have little to do with getting work of such a quality done. The old gibe, "You cannot make a man good by Act of Parliament," might be modernized into, "You cannot make a man an artist by Act of Parliament." The reply is the same in each case. If we cannot make a man good by legislation, we can give him a chance to be good, and a chance is all most normal people require. If we cannot make people artists by legislation, we can make it easier for them to be artists ;

and the amount of careful and painstaking work that people do, even under present conditions, without any financial motive leads us to suppose that there are many potential artists only waiting for a chance.

There are two important things that legislation can do: it can diminish the amount of useless or degrading work which men are asked to do, and it can set men free from unnecessary burdens, so that it is easier for them to concentrate upon excellence of workmanship. A nation which seriously sets itself to plan out the production of goods with the idea of producing the best possible commodities in the best way would obviously encourage the production of those things necessary to health of mind and body and discourage the production of useless or harmful things. It would be difficult to imagine a committee of disinterested and highly educated experts taking the trouble to organize the production of penny brass brooches, vulgar postcards, unwholesome foodstuffs, and shoddy and hideous clothing and furniture. Things like these are produced to sell; they serve no other purpose than to produce some small profit to those concerned in their manufacture. Men who are forced to assist in their manufacture cannot in the very nature of things express any artistic ability they possess, and they have to be content with finding an outlet for it by taking up some voluntary work in their leisure time of a manual or mental nature. If these same men were allowed to do work worth doing, and could feel that the work was to be directly used for a rightful and honest purpose, they could put into their daily work of making those things which the community needed all the artistic endeavour which now lies dormant.

Just as a control of production, and the alteration of its basis from profit to use, would tend to result in a change in the kind and quality of goods made, so it would tend to relieve the individual of unnecessary anxieties. A man cannot concentrate upon the quality of his work if

he suspects that the very excellence and speed of his work will create his own future unemployment, or if he is worried about his family, about possible sickness, his weekly budget, his house. These things are distractions. When, by organized effort, the whole community has so harboured its resources, so shaped its international policy, so adjusted and balanced its production and distribution, so learned to spend wisely its national income that it can say to each individual member, "We have arranged that you and yours shall be secure from war and poverty; your children shall receive adequate training; arrangements have been made to deal with old age and possible sickness; our resources are yours because you are one of us," then the community may well say, "We ask that your particular piece of work shall be as well done as it is possible for work to be done."

It is a tragedy that so many good men have to spend their time and strength in grappling with problems which are artificial instead of being able to get on with the work they could so well do. If the earnest people who have spent many weary hours over the housing schemes, where they were struggling with a problem which was not a housing problem, but a problem of land, material, finance and labour, had simply had to think of houses, how much more they could have accomplished! If the community had been in a position to say, "We will arrange for a supply of good materials; your job is to produce healthy, comfortable, beautiful dwellings," what a housing scheme we should have had! If the weaver, and the dyer, and the gardener, and the builder, and the printer, and the potter, and every other kind of productive worker need only think of the beauty and quality of his goods, instead of always of the price of goods, is it impossible to think of a future nation which would be fed and clothed and housed by artists?

If we should be tempted to think that it is impossible

to get a standard of service without some direct financial or other individual motive, it is well to remember that, even under the present unfavourable conditions, the sense of communal responsibility has grown of late years.

The capacity for service, exhibited so magnificently in war-time, is present, though often undeveloped, in peace-time.

Already a large amount of public work is being done, and as a matter of fact always has been done, by those who had nothing of a personal nature to gain by doing it.

The wastage of a great deal of this capacity is one of the most tragic features of a commercialized world. If those gifted writers who contribute interminable and lugubrious articles on the selfishness, laziness and general unsatisfactoriness of their fellow-citizens to our dailies and weeklies could use their undoubted talents to help to bring about social adjustments which would enable the nation to tap the huge resources of human goodwill, it is possible that they would find that opportunity was all that people needed. In the words of our American friends, "they'd be surprised."

We have the germ of the community idea ; it has been slowly and imperceptibly growing. It has to be fostered and developed.

There must be a development of the quality of citizenship. There is too great a tendency to think of men in terms of commodities instead of commodities in terms of men. The general public hears a good deal about miners, steelworkers, transport-workers when there is a dispute in any particular industry, but it does not hear much about them at any other time, and there has been a tendency to look upon those who worked, especially in certain industries, as part of a convenient machine for obtaining certain commodities. This point of view was naïvely put by a very kindly and charming lady who happened to see from her window workmen preparing to leave the house on which they had been

engaged. "What a pity it seems," she remarked, "for those men to have to leave off building just because it is six o'clock!"

Just so. It would have been a pity if the only important thing about a bricklayer is that he lays bricks, but it should not be the only important thing. It is desirable that a man should be a good bricklayer or a good shoemaker, but it is also desirable that he should be a good husband, and a good father, and a good student, that he should know something of the way in which his town is governed, and something of the way in which his country is governed, and something about literature and art and music; and people must learn to think of him in terms of all these other aspects of life, and not only be interested in him in respect of the fact that he lays bricks or makes shoes.

The immorality of the Capitalist system does not lie in the fact that under it men sometimes receive low wages; it lies in the fact that under its operations the raiment tends to become more than the body and the meat more than life. To make community-life sweet and wholesome, things must exist for men, and not men for things. The life of the town need not be sordid and commercialized. Simplicity and beauty are not things of the countryside only. There is a simplicity which is the result of complicated processes; there is a beauty of function as well as a beauty of form; there is a harmony to be found in crowds, and a freedom which is more truly found in association than in isolation. At the entrance to a beautiful continental park there is this notice: "That the trees and flowers may be preserved, that the gardens may retain their beauty, that the birds may be protected, this park is placed in your care."

That is citizenship—the common privilege of sharing a beautiful thing, the common responsibility of keeping it beautiful.

II

PROPAGANDA—WISE AND OTHERWISE

WASTEFUL PROPAGANDA.

It is perhaps natural when things go wrong to desire to find someone who can be blamed. Hunting for the scapegoat is a very ancient and fascinating pursuit. Moral indignation may be a right and proper emotion under certain circumstances, so long as it does not degenerate into an easy shirking of responsibility, which may happen. There is a certain type of mind which labours under the delusion that when it has been angry with somebody it has accomplished something, just as a certain type of patriot feels vaguely that he has rendered a service to his own country when he has been rude or unjust to someone else's country. So strongly does a man of this type feel that hatred of another country is an indispensable corollary of love for his own that he invariably refers to men whose patriotism takes the form of a jealousy for the honour of their country, which leads them to be scrupulously honourable and just in their dealings with every other country, as "lovers of every country but their own."

As it is impossible to solve international problems by hatred, so it is impossible to solve national problems by hatred. Hatred is such a waste of time. To attempt to solve great social problems by finding someone who can be blamed for their existence is the height of folly, since people's minds are thereby distracted from the

real intricacy and difficulty of the task before them. If we allow ourselves to imagine nebulous groups of people, variously labelled, who are so different from all the rest of humanity, so lost to all sense of decency, that they alone are responsible for all the ills of society, then we may be misled into believing that the remedies for these ills are more simple than they really are.

We have seen what loss of life and time and money, what years of unnecessary suffering, have been caused by the attempt to fix the blame for war upon one single nation. Real issues have been obscured, peace has been delayed, untold agony has been suffered by the peoples of all the nations concerned, accurate thinking has been almost impossible, and the painstaking work of many statesmen has been time and again brought to naught because of this one fundamental error. So the attempt to blame any one group of people for the disorder now obtaining in our social life leads us down many wrong paths, retards needed changes, distorts our views, and prevents us from tackling problems in the most scientific way.

It must surely be obvious that a thousand different influences have helped to mould and shape our social system as we know it to-day. In many cases developments have taken place without conscious volition on the part of any particular person. The Capitalist system, now inadequate to deal with present-day needs, survives, not because it is supported by one class, but because a proportion of every class either definitely support it or, more often, simply neglect to assist in changing it.

This being so, it is unjust to attack persons instead of attacking institutions. Not only is it unjust, but it is wasteful.

When ammunition is scarce it is criminal to waste any of it. Every bullet fired at a royalty owner instead of being fired at the folly of the system of paying

royalties is a bullet wasted because aimed at the wrong target. If the nation allows a private individual to take from one of its most important key industries every year large sums of money in the form of royalty rents, then it may well be annoyed with itself for its own stupidity, but to be annoyed with the individual who accepts the money is simply childish.

If a nation says to builders, contractors, manufacturers, "Houses are your concern; they are no concern of ours. It you make a fortune out of building them it is your concern. If you lose your capital it is your concern. If you get bad tenants it is your concern. Make your own arrangements with the landowner and all the other people concerned," and if it finds after some years of this method that many of its members are badly housed, that houses have been built to rent and not to live in, that they are sometimes too small, sometimes jerry-built, sometimes unfit for habitation, surely it is a pity to waste time in calling builders and manufacturers or anyone else hard names. Too much time has been wasted already. The nation is better employed in sitting down in sackcloth and ashes to consider how it may most quickly acquire for its needs the necessary materials which its own negligence has allowed to be monopolized for so long. This is not a spectacular method, but it is more likely to get us there. A book was published a short time ago with a very suggestive title. It was *Old Sins have Long Shadows*. When a whole nation has pursued a certain course for a number of years there is no quick and simple method by which it can throw off the consequences of its past actions. Repentance may stave off an arbitrary punishment, but it can never stave off the punishment which consists in the inevitable consequences of actions once committed.

That is why apparently uncompromising and drastic methods of reform, such as executions and confiscation,

so often prove less satisfactory than people hoped they would be—their simplicity is their undoing.

Fiery denunciations of selected bodies of sinners are just as futile ; they sound very deadly, but hard words break no bones. Sinners do not mind being denounced so long as their opportunity for sinning is not unduly interfered with. When popular preachers deliver orations on the sins of Society, no one enjoys it more than Society. A sermon attacking Sunday bridge-playing, heard in the morning, tends to lend an added zest to the game of the afternoon. A denunciation of the extravagance in dress of Society butterflies, heard on Sunday evening, gives an added thrill to the visit of the butterfly to her dress-maker on Monday morning. A dispassionate examination of the way in which Society *gets* the money it spends is worth much more than the most passionate denunciation of the way in which it spends the money when obtained. A course of sermons on those lines, delivered without heat or recrimination, might be less fiery, might even appear tame, but the church would certainly not be crowded with delighted members of fashionable Society. To hand over wealth which has been created by the community to private individuals instead of retaining it for communal purposes, and then to get wildly excited because the money is spent on lavish display, is locking the door after the horse is gone with a vengeance ; the energy would be better employed in discovering a method by which the community can retain its wealth.

No one in the present generation can be held responsible, for instance, for the monopoly of land. Very few in this generation would defend it on moral grounds. It was reported a short time ago that a noble Marquis advanced the highly original theory that God gave the land to the landowners for certain specific reasons, but he is probably in a very small minority.

The average person says : “ We know that no human being created land and that no human being can show

title-deeds from the creator of land, but we are not responsible for the fact that private ownership has developed. Previous generations took land as the spoil of war, passed Enclosure Acts, received land from various monarchs, and since then it has been bought and sold as any other commodity is bought and sold. We are not at all certain that it will be a good thing to make the land national property, and we do not see how you are going to do it without causing trouble and committing injustice."

There is a good deal in this point of view. Once a mistake has been made, however unconsciously, it is apt to produce a situation in which every possible action has something in it which is undesirable.

If we continue the present system injustice will be done; if we confiscate, injustice will be done; if we acquire by purchase, injustice will be done. All we can do is to work out a scheme which will make the necessary changes with the least possible injustice, with the least possible dislocation, and with the least possible suffering.

This exceedingly difficult task is not helped much by attempting to divide people up into arbitrary and artificial groups, each with its distinguishing label. It is becoming increasingly difficult to divide the nation into classes at all. For years the phrase "the employing class" or "the employers" has been very glibly used; but if the bitter experience of the last three years has taught us anything it has surely taught us that there is no such class as the "employing class," or perhaps it would be better to say that every living man, woman and child belongs to the employing class. The miner, who used to call the coal-owner his "employer," has found that the coal-owner has no power to employ him; that his employers were the purchasers of the coal he hewed, and that he is unemployed, and will continue to be unemployed, until once more there is a connection between him and the people who need his coal. As

with the miner so with other workers. They have had to learn that their employers were in reality the peoples of their own and other nations who bought the goods they produced, and that their problem is not to bring pressure to bear upon any so-called "employing class," but to discover a way by which they can maintain contact with their real employers at home and abroad. Their problem is to discover the barriers which stand between them and their fellow-workers, and to remove those barriers. They have to work out international machinery which will so standardize conditions of labour, so stabilize and equalize the purchasing power of the peoples of the various nations, that there may be a constant and steady interchange of goods. This means many tedious and minute adjustments; it means the substitution of an international for a national outlook in industry; it means the assumption of control of supplies of raw material and finance; it means a tremendous enlargement of the function of the Trade Union movement. Cheap and frothy vituperations in a work of this kind are valueless.

Who are the "Capitalist class"? It is at present perfectly legal for any person who can manage to do so to draw an income and accept communal services without rendering any definite service in return. Thousands of persons work for a weekly wage, often a small weekly wage, and at the same time receive an income from some form of investment. So long as that is the accepted rule, and so long as the majority of voters endorse that method, there can be no distinction drawn between the Capitalist class and any other class. They overlap at many points. Until such time as the nation decides to own and control its own resources and manage its own business, its concerns must be managed by private individuals or groups of private individuals, and the main question is not whether these individuals make money or lose money—some do one thing, some the other—the question is whether the time has arrived

when public ownership and control must be substituted for private ownership and control. If the nation decides to allow resources to be monopolized by rings and trusts, then it must take the inevitable consequences. If, on the other hand, it realizes the overwhelming danger of allowing indispensable supplies to be monopolized, then it will take steps to acquire effective control. This is the issue which has to be fought out in the near future, and it is imperative that all who wish to see the coming of the Socialist Commonwealth should put away the temptation to indulge in bitterness and hatred and concentrate upon preparing the mass of the people who will decide this question, so that they may be informed and ready. It will not be decided by a small section; it will be decided by the people; and their education is the pre-eminent concern.

It may be objected that it is necessary to expose robber chiefs and wicked uncles. That may be so, but our chief care is not the mentality of the robber chief, but the mentality of the babes in the wood, there are so many more of them.

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

It is an easy thing to smash the shell of a nut, but there is a good deal of risk that the seed within may be injured in the process. It takes a little more time to place the seed in an environment in which it will germinate, but when it does, the growing plant will split the worn-out shell and it will decay.

It takes time for the daffodil to expand and slough off its faded sheath, but if the sheath had been torn away from the bud there would have been no perfect daffodil. Well-meaning and kind-hearted people have sometimes tried to help the butterfly to leave its prison by assisting it to throw off its case, and the butterfly has emerged crippled for life. The same thing happens

when an amateur tries to help the chicken to get out of the shell, by helping it, as he thinks, to break it away.

A strong and vigorous growth of the new idea soon disposes of the old idea, and to foster the growth of the new is a very sure way of destroying the old.

Having decided that propaganda should be directed towards institutions rather than towards persons, there are still several methods of attack open. There is the method of making a fierce and direct attack upon an unjust, outworn or evil thing, and there is the method of attacking it indirectly by making it impossible for it to exist, or at any rate difficult for it to exist.

It is the difference between harsh and drastic punishments for crime and laws which make it more and more difficult to commit crime, which make it easier to do the right and social thing, and harder to do the wrong and anti-social thing. It is the difference between punishing husbands for being cruel to their wives and making wives the sort of wives whom it is very difficult to ill-treat. It is the difference between (1) passing severe laws about prostitution, getting flogging clauses, imprisonment for soliciting, and (2) giving every woman economic security and a fuller physical and mental education.

It certainly is a great temptation, when irritated by the presence of, and people's affection for, worn-out and effete customs, to attempt to hasten matters by resorting to smashing tactics, and there are cases where perhaps they are the only tactics possible. At the same time, it is possible for two things to happen.

First, an ill-considered and unconditional attack may prolong the life of the very thing it is meant to kill. An institution which has ceased to function tends to decay, but sometimes an attack upon it acts as oxygen upon a dying body and artificially prolongs its life.

Many things which become evil as time goes on were not evil in their origin. It is the fate of many a law or

custom to be instituted in good faith and with a very sound motive and then to degenerate. A restriction which is useful and necessary under certain circumstances may be retained after those special circumstances have passed and develop into a tyranny. Customs spring up, traditions grow round them, and they retain their influence after their time of usefulness is past. Nothing antagonizes people more than to hear a cherished tradition roughly handled, as they think, unfairly. "After all," they say, "it has been of use in the past," and they unconsciously rally to the very thing which they had been allowing to die quietly of neglect, and so its life is prolonged instead of being shortened. It is notorious that a crowd generally takes the part of the hunted criminal against the policeman, not because they really uphold the criminal, but because there is the instinct to take the part of the hunted. A transition period, whether in a small or larger concern, is bound to cause a certain amount of dislocation. This inevitable dislocation causes a certain amount of antagonism to be aroused in people who do not fully understand the necessity for the change and can only see the discomfort of the transition stage. It is therefore undesirable to arouse unnecessary antagonism.

The fact that an attempt is made to take the knife from the baby makes him cling to it, whereas if baby is offered a pear he will most certainly drop the knife of his own accord.

People are very quick to resent any shadow of what they consider to be an injustice, especially an injustice to someone else.

What a terrific outcry would be raised if any political party announced as part of its programme that it intended to introduce legislation to prevent people from living in large houses and keeping large staffs of servants. Such an announcement would be looked upon as a dastardly and unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the

individual. The people who would be most shocked and outraged would probably be those who lived in tiny houses and who had never dreamed of being able to afford even one servant, and there is no doubt that hundreds of these people would withdraw their support from any party announcing such a policy. Yet the large and cumbersome houses once so common tend to be turned into flats. There is a general tendency to live in small and convenient homes and to break up the huge establishments of a generation ago. This is due, not to any arbitrary law, but to a thousand subtle influences. Taxation and the increased cost of staffs have automatically caused people to alter their mode of life in many cases, and in the process there has been far less friction and bitterness aroused. As long as there is an endless supply of girls who consent to work in basement kitchens and run up endless flights of steps, basement kitchens and flights of steps remain; as soon as girls refuse to work under those conditions basement kitchens and flights of steps have simply got to go. They go without undue fuss, and in their stead bungalows and two-storied houses, complete with labour-saving contrivances, spring up.

People who never gave a thought to the best and quickest ways of getting work done when a "general" could be obtained for very little money, willing to work unlimited hours under any conditions, give a good deal of thought to it when they have to pay a woman an adequate hourly wage, and no one feels particularly sore about it, as they would have felt if they had been forced by Act of Parliament to alter their mode of life.

The second thing that may happen is that, when under some particular stress of circumstance or some unique situation it is possible by a rapid and raging propaganda to destroy at a stroke some admittedly unsatisfactory social custom, it may be discovered that a vacuum has been created, chaos ensues, and the apparently rapid

method turns out not to be so rapid after all. When the seven devils were driven out they left an empty room, into which seven other devils entered. If the first lot of devils had been squeezed out by the entrance of seven angels there would have been no room for the second lot of devils to get in. It is very important to make sure the angels are ready to move in, and time spent in helping them to grow is not as a rule wasted, though it may appear slow at the time.

May we take a somewhat extreme hypothetical case?

When we had the whole of the working class working very long hours, as was the case up till recently, it is possible to imagine a humane person saying: "This is the crowning infamy, that men and women, and even children, should be working for ten or twelve hours in pit and factory and workshop. It must stop; everything must give way to this one important reform." It is quite possible to imagine that a number of determined people might have succeeded in so presenting this point of view that some crisis might have arisen which would have forced the Government in power to pass legislation cutting down hours to six or five. It is not difficult to imagine the result. The working class, being very literally a *working* class, having had previously no leisure, would have no provision for the use of leisure, no place in which to spend leisure. When long hours were in vogue it has often been related that in some mining districts housing was so restricted that the beds were used by relays of men working different shifts. Desirable as the shortening of hours was, the method of a drastic and sudden change would have suddenly turned out thousands of people, with no homes, very little education, few books, no theatres, very few public buildings of any kind, no resources such as a wide culture produces, and while, of course, in time adjustments would have been made to cope with the situation, it could only have been after a period of utter chaos, and probably a demoraliza-

tion as complete as that caused by the very evil which had been, with the best intentions, removed.

Hours have been reduced in a different way. It is true that the method has been apparently slower and is not yet complete, but how much more stable and satisfactory has the method been! An hour is taken off; at the same time the propaganda for a shorter day has been taking place side by side with other propaganda, for education, housing and social facilities. The worker learns to read; he gets a little leisure in which to read; at the same time he gets a slight increase in wages. His reading opens his mind; he wants a little more leisure and a little more money. Having a little time to spend at home he feels the need of a home. Perhaps he goes a little farther afield for his holiday. Travel still further enlarges his ideas. As he sees more of the world, reads more, gets more time, he needs clothes he never needed before, needs facilities for travel, needs a theatre in which he may see the plays he has discovered. His discontent, along twenty different lines, is directed towards making alterations along twenty different lines, and instead of one isolated reform booming into his life, the acquiring of leisure, the capacity to enjoy leisure, the facilities for using leisure all grow up together to make one stable and desirable whole. Slow as has been the process of shortening hours from the point of view of those who feel strongly on this point, the amazing fact remains that even that slow process has been quicker than the process of making the necessary adjustments. The most tragic sight of many great industrial towns is still the aimless and bored procession of people wandering up and down the streets, especially on Sunday, the day of leisure.

It seems almost impossible, with object lessons such as these before our eyes, that there should still be people who contend that reforms are a mistake, that the only possible line for a true Socialist to take is the ceaseless

attack upon Capitalism, and that turning aside to obtain reforms or accepting gradual reforms is retarding the coming of Socialism. "Reforms," they say, "make people contented." That is open to doubt. There is an old wives' saying that "much wants more," and certain it is that it is the horse which is full of corn that kicks and not, as a rule, the starved horse.

The idea that men become revolutionary when they are starving is not borne out by experience. One of the worst results of a period of unemployment is the tendency it has to make men accept work under any conditions. A vast starving multitude is not the best foundation for a great and lasting social change. Of course, it is perfectly true that there is a certain kind of desperation into which people get when they are tortured beyond endurance, but is it the kind of desperation which really leads to the goal?

It is perfectly possible to arm a desperate crowd and lead them to take over factories, for instance; but when the factory is obtained, what then? Have the population as a whole a clear idea of what workers' control means? Have the operatives themselves clearly thought out the problems of their relationship to the rest of the community? Have they decided on what conditions they will produce, and how? If not, then the ease with which the factory has been seized will only be equalled by the ease with which it will be re-seized by some other band of people with differing ideas.

A Bill for acquiring land can be drafted with the greatest ease and a date can be fixed for its turnover to the State—nothing simpler. But what if your peasants have not decided the terms upon which they will work the land and the terms upon which they will exchange their produce with the town workers? It takes time to make the social ownership of mines a clear, popular issue; it takes time to accustom men to work them on new lines; it takes time to arrange the details of the

production and distribution of coal under the new method ; but when the nationalization of mines is not a thing of ink and paper, but a thing which finds an echo to some extent, however small, in every citizen's mind, upon what a stable basis that nationalization is carried out ! This is not a plea for laziness or lukewarmness ; the Socialist who believes most wholeheartedly in his cause is very often the one with most patience, because he realizes that it may be literally true that the longest way round is the shortest way home.

The broadest propaganda may be, and is, the most uncompromising propaganda. Everything which helps a man to visualize a richer and fuller life is propaganda ; everything which helps to substitute the idea of creation for the idea of destruction is propaganda ; everything which helps to substitute the idea of service for the idea of being served is propaganda ; everything which helps a man to gain self-respect and dignity, which gives him greater health of body or mind, may be classed as Socialist propaganda ; and it is the clear realization of the dual nature of his task which makes the helpful propagandist.

A very old man went to hear a modern preacher, who preached for two hours in order to prove that there is no hell. As he left the church the old man remarked to his friend : " That's all very well, but if there ain't any 'ell, what's going to become of we ? "

It is difficult to make a heaven for people who have learned to think in terms of hell. It is the Socialist who most clearly sees the hell of modern conditions, who most clearly visualizes the heaven which could be created, and, just because he sees these things so clearly, who realizes that heaven can never be heaven until we are willing to spend time in making the sort of people who can enjoy heaven.

It need not be that this is going to be such a very

slow process. We need not look back over the last fifty years and groan at the thought of having to wait for another fifty years before we improve as much as we have improved in the past. It is very encouraging to reflect that there is a law of accelerated progress. The cyclist whose brakes go wrong at the top of the hill travels much faster as he nears the bottom than he did when he began at the top. This law, so disastrous to the unwary cyclist, is most helpful in its political and social application. Sound building work in the past not only makes progress more easy, but makes it more swift. There is no reason why our progress should not be accelerated by the impetus of the patient work of the past, and with all the advantage of past triumphs behind us it should be possible to make an advance in months which would have needed years in a past generation. Fortunately, at our stage of development, we need not choose between a very slow method and a quick method, but between a quick method and one which appears to be a little quicker, but does not eventually prove to be so.

Propaganda may and should be uncompromising and unceasing, but above all things it must be constructive.

III

THE CANDLE IN THE PUMPKIN

FEAR OF CHANGE.

It is easy to jeer at people who are afraid of bogeys, but anyone who has suddenly been met, in a dark lane, by a hollow pumpkin containing a candle, held aloft on a pole draped with a white sheet, must admit that it is a terrifying experience, even if the terror only lasts for a second. People cannot be blamed for being startled at first, but they may perhaps be blamed for continuing to be afraid long after it has been conclusively proved that the bogey is nothing but a pumpkin carried by a mischievous boy.

It certainly does seem strange that so many hundreds of people whose daily life brings them such real anxiety and sorrow should allow themselves to be made afraid of imaginary sorrows which they are told will come upon them if they contemplate any change. It might appear at first sight very extraordinary that a woman who has brought up a large family of children on a very small wage, without any kind of adequate accommodation, who has suffered agonies of anxiety in times of unemployment or industrial depression, should be so easily frightened when told of the horrible things that will happen to her if ever Socialism comes into vogue. One might think that the natural reply of such a woman would be, "Well, my life has been so hard as it is that I do not think Socialism could make it any harder." If all the dreadful

things happened which even the vivid imagination of the *Morning Post* or the *Sunday Pictorial* solemnly warn us of, could anything worse happen than for a woman to lose her only son, as so many women did during the last war? Could anything worse happen than for a woman to lose not one son, but in some cases several sons? Yet, after all, it is perhaps natural that the known, however painful, should be feared less than the unknown. That which is familiar is less terrifying than that which is strange and new.

So there is a fear of change which is not confined to one class, but which is fairly general, in differing degree, among every class. It is a right and proper thing that there should be a certain amount of caution displayed in making changes; a change is not necessarily good just because it is a change. At the same time an unreasoning and undue fear of change is a very potent factor in retarding progress. The marked unwillingness to accept new ideas which makes the path of the reformer such a thorny one may be roughly said to be due to three main causes:

People tend to confuse arbitrary changes with inevitable readjustments.

They also tend to minimize the difficulties of an existing system while exaggerating the difficulties of a proposed alternative.

They do not take sufficiently into account the power of adjustment and adaptation which all living organisms possess.

If social readjustments were simply suggested because a few people put their heads together and then announced to the world, "We have decided that we must have certain economic and social changes," then it would be natural that the average person might be very suspicious of these proposals. But this is not the case. The Socialist does not invent changes; he sees changes which are taking place naturally and inevitably, changes which

are contributed to by many different people, often quite unconsciously, and he sees that these inventions and discoveries are making it imperative that social adjustments shall be made. Every bit of new machinery, every fresh scientific discovery, every new idea in medicine, in transport, in education, in business, starts a slight dislocation which must mean readjustment in other directions. The Socialist does not look upon social changes as an isolated reform; it is his business to attempt to make social adjustments keep pace with progress in other directions, knowing that progress may be a source of pain instead of a source of increased happiness unless every side of life is balanced. This has been very sadly brought home to us in the past few years by the result of allowing progress in productivity to outstrip the development of the machinery of distribution.

It is the height of folly to imagine that there can be change and development in one direction without a corresponding development in every other direction, without great disharmony and needless suffering. Probably fifty years ago there were thousands of estimable and worthy citizens who were rendering valuable service to the community who had the haziest ideas of other countries. The word "tropics" or "Eastern lands" conjured up in their minds a picture of a ring of naked savages sitting under a palm-tree listening to a white man in a heavy black cloth suit reading aloud from a Bible.

With the natural development of the inter-relation of nations the time is arriving—if it has not already arrived—when men who were in that mental condition, so far from being worthy citizens, would be very dangerous members of the community.

Men who try to solve modern problems by thinking of them in the political or religious terms of their grandfathers make a tragic mistake. The nice old Noncon-

formist minister who wrote to a somewhat youthful Labour candidate telling her that he had solved all "these problems" before she was born fell into that error. The problems of his own age he may have helped to solve; the problems of this he obviously did not, for the simple reason that they did not then exist.

As objects appear unduly large when seen through a mist, so difficulties appear more insuperable when they are unfamiliar.

So many people seem to have the idea that if they can point out a dozen difficulties which would crop up under a Socialist régime they have finally disposed of Socialism.

It never seems to occur to them that the system now in vogue simply bristles with difficulties, but that we have become so accustomed to these endless anomalies and injustices and the everlasting attempt to settle them that we do not see them in their rightful proportion.

To get an idea of the relative virtues of Capitalism and Socialism it is necessary to try to imagine them as both being new and untried, so that it is possible to get a fairer idea of the fundamental principles of both.

If it were possible to imagine a perfectly unbiased person who had never lived under either system being asked if he thought it would be a better arrangement for a community of people to own and control the land and raw materials upon which they must maintain existence, or hand these over to a few selected persons, who should have power to use them as they wished and allow the community as a whole to use them only upon such terms and at such times as these owners decided, it seems reasonable to imagine that the person would stare at his questioner and say: "Why, you must be crazy to ask such a question. How could the nation live if it could not at any time get perfect access to all the means of life?" Yet so accustomed are we to get our supplies by an elaborate system of barter from those

who own them that many otherwise reasonable people cannot imagine any other method of getting them.

Even the terrible experience of the war, when the very life-blood of the nation, its munitions and food, were held up by "private enterprise," and only panic legislation instituting a crude and hurried system of control saved the situation, has not opened their eyes.

So it is in all the smaller manifestations of the system. Enormous difficulties and impossible situations are created every day, necessitating ceaseless toil in the effort to keep the machine going at a tremendous sacrifice of time and happiness, yet these troubles, being known, tend to be less terrifying than their remedies, because they are as yet only little known.

It is doubtful whether any of us give full weight to the capacity of living things to adjust themselves to altered conditions, and so we fear difficulties which never arise.

The doubter who thought that steam-engines could never run because cows would get on the line is a perfect example. He did not realize that when men are clever enough to make engines they are clever enough to deal with cows. There is a libellous story of a certain railway which solved the problem by always keeping behind the cow, but other railways have solved the problem in other and more desirable ways.

Frightful difficulties which reforms were going to create prove so often not to be so frightful.

The abolition of the death penalty for stealing did not increase crime, as had been feared. Humane reforms in prison life have not made more criminals, but have tended to make less. Humane conditions in industry have not ruined trade, as many imagined; even the most desperate reform, which was going to still the music of the spheres for ever and reduce the world to chaos, the enfranchisement of women, has not appreciably upset the universe.

The more scientific and just the basis of society becomes the more easily adjustments are made. Difficulties have a wonderful way of solving themselves when the fundamental basis is just, while a system based on an injustice and a lie produces difficulties which are never really adjusted.

It is as though a race of people had lived all their lives in houses built over old workings which caused a subsidence of the ground. Every house they had ever seen was cracked and crooked. There was a regular industry in special props and cements which were used to fill cracks and prop up slanting walls. The foundations being insecure, cracks and slants were the natural consequence.

Such people would say : " It is the natural thing for houses to crack. You cannot, human nature being what it is, build houses without a slant. The only thing to be done is to keep on finding out better cement and stronger props, so that the houses may be kept up."

But the man from another district would say : " My dear people, if your houses were built on the solid rock and had secure foundations, there would be no cracks to fill and no slants to prop up."

Therefore the fundamental changes the Socialist has in his mind are not really terrifying if people will only look the bogeys squarely in the eye instead of screaming and fainting off every time a new one is invented. Fashions in bogeys change, as do fashions in clothes.

The naughty boy cannot very well use the bogey of the " clutching hand " and " Jack the Ripper " variety after the experience the country has had of a Labour Government, but the bogey of the next few campaigns will be a subtle and more refined one. It is impossible in a book of this size to attempt to examine these bogeys in detail, but we may perhaps glance at them for one fleeting moment in the hope that when they appear they

will have lost their power to strike terror into our hearts.

It will not be said, as it was before our experiment in government, that the "streets will run with blood," but it will probably be argued that Socialism will make for a dead level existence, with no incentive to initiative; that the Socialist wishes to reward just and unjust, lazy and energetic, good and bad alike. Especially is this so when questions relating to the payment and conditions of service are being discussed. It is very necessary to approach these important matters of status, payment, and, in fact, the whole question of the regulation of income, equal access to services such as education, child endowment, etc., without undue timidity or prejudice, as they rank among the most intricate problems of the future.

THE STATUS OF THE WORKER.

A weekly paper wailed the other day that the increase in free education was giving men a distaste for manual work. "The Socialist knows very well," it lamented, "that under any state of society dirty work would have to be done." Not only does the Socialist know it, but the Socialist has not the slightest objection to it. Dirty work is often the most fascinating and healthy work. Every normal healthy individual loves at times to get thoroughly dirty. No sensible person has ever minded men getting dirty; they may perhaps have minded that the men whose work made them most dirty were the men whose homes did not contain bathrooms, but that is a different point. Some of the most highly educated men in the country do work which makes them dirty. Research workers get dirty, collectors get dirty, airmen get dirty, inventors get dirty. Thousands of intellectual people who own cars and love them, or own gardens and love them, get themselves upon occasion dirty.

Education does not give men a distaste for manual work ; it does very rightly give men a distaste for the status of the manual worker. The fault does not lie in education ; it lies in the idea that certain kinds of necessary work must be performed by certain kinds of people ; that some forms of work are better done by those who have had a short and inadequate education, other forms are better done by those who have had a public school and University education ; that various kinds of workers shall be cut off into definite groups, each having its own way of life, eating a different quality of food, wearing a different quality of clothing, using a different quality of furniture. This view is not confined to one class, but is almost universally accepted. If it was suggested that an agricultural labourer should hoe turnips and then ride to his bungalow, bath and dress and dine, and perhaps attend a performance of a Greek play, no one would be more surprised than the agricultural labourer. Yet when we view the question calmly and dispassionately there really seems to be no reason why necessary farm-work, especially if done with the latest machine and in the most modern way, should preclude a man from living in a bungalow, wearing a dress suit, and enjoying the drama.

The life of a bricklayer would be a different life from the life of a schoolmaster, but need it be a different quality of life ?

There is a difference between equality of opportunity and equality of status. It may be said : " We have equality of opportunity ; a weaver may in England rise to be a Prime Minister." But do we want every weaver to rise to be a Prime Minister ? It would be very uncomfortable to have thousands of Prime Ministers and no weavers. The idea is surely not so much to encourage every fisherman and labourer to rise to be a professor or a Cabinet Minister or a lawyer, but to arrange that he can be a fisherman or labourer and have a quality of

life which approximates more nearly to that of those who are serving the community in the capacity of Cabinet Ministers or lawyers.

The idea that some kinds of service must be rendered by people who live in a certain way, and other kinds of service by people who live in quite a different way, has no scientific basis. It is so just because, up to now, it has been so. But there is coming a new idea of service between friends and equals, of an exchange of services. There must be no idea of giving service on the part of one class and receiving service on the part of another; the very fact that we still speak of a "working class" is a proof that we still accept the fact that there can be a class which does not work. We have allowed ourselves to be shocked at a good many things; there are two things which should shock us supremely:

1. The possibility of anyone accepting service from the community without rendering service in return.
2. The inconceivable vulgarity of asking for conditions for ourselves which we are not prepared to grant to every other citizen.

EQUALITY.

The alteration of the status of the worker, particularly the manual worker, immediately gives rise to the fear that some injustice is to be done, that men will be reduced to one dead level, that there will be no incentive to improvement, that life will be tame and colourless, and so on.

It is not at all certain that these fears are well founded.

As a matter of fact, the removal of artificial inequalities will increase instead of decrease legitimate inequalities which make for variety.

People who belong to the class which receives a high standard of education, whose environment is spacious, and who from birth have received the best food of mind and body obtainable, do not turn out into one type;

they tend to differ as individuals more widely than do individuals of the class which receives a more limited upbringing.

There is an inequality of talent and potentiality which makes for variety, which is absolutely unavoidable and wholly good. That will and must remain under any system, and will increase under Socialism.

There is, on the other hand, an artificial inequality, due to differences of environment, education, payment, and a hundred other causes, which is undesirable and can and must be removed.

If we fear that equality of treatment will bring undeserved happiness to unworthy people, that is a fear which need not trouble us unduly. In any case so many worthy people suffer to-day that it would be worth taking a risk in order to remove unwarranted burdens from their backs.

But is happiness a matter only of environment, or is it largely a matter of individual use of environment? We cannot give happiness to anyone; we can only give potential happiness. Whether that happiness becomes a reality depends upon the individual.

Two men go to a concert. They sit side by side; they have an equal income; they pay the same amount for their seats. One man gets untold happiness from the concert, the other man gets boredom, because he has not the necessary natural or acquired knowledge of music to enable him to enjoy it. Two people pay to go to a cricket match. One enjoys every minute of it, the other is mildly soothed to slumber at the best and bored at the worst; one man understands the game, the other does not. It is not the price of the ticket, but the capacity for enjoyment which determines how much each man gets for his money.

So we need not fear that there will be too much undeserved happiness in the world, even if every citizen gets many things which are now denied him.

If we fear that the enrichment of one kind of person necessarily means the impoverishment of another, that also is open to doubt. The things which make people wealthy—the really valuable things—are the things which are plentiful and do not lose by being shared. There are certainly not enough castles and diamond necklaces to go round, but these things are not necessary to wealth.

The things which enable a man to have a well-developed and healthy body, a well-stored mind, the capacity for good work and the chance to do it, are things which it is reasonable to suppose could be produced in very large quantities by scientific arrangement and management. The problem at the moment seems to be to distribute and sell, not to produce, goods, and it is the considered opinion of experts on the subject that man's power of productivity is now colossal. There seems a possibility, therefore, that it may be feasible to change the idea of having a very large class which works very hard and is very poor, and another very small class which does not work very hard and is very rich, into the idea of having a class which works very hard and is also very rich.

The combination of riches and hard work is an excellent one. It exists in isolated instances to-day. We could with advantage extend the idea to embrace the entire community.

PAYMENT.

The whole question of income and remuneration is overdue for discussion. The present arrangement is admittedly unsatisfactory.

The haggling over the price of labour as over the price of potatoes, the endless committees and boards which strive to fix wages, the constant disputes, strikes and lock-outs, and the resulting agreements which only last at best for a short time, and while they do last cause

dissatisfaction and unrest, are admitted on every hand to be a constant source of annoyance.

There will be much discussion and many experiments probably before some satisfactory way of arranging for the remuneration of citizens and for the arrangement of the conditions of service will be discovered. It will probably be found that income will have to be separated from service and each treated on a separate basis. It is certain that income will tend more and more to be equalized.

It is helpful, in case this idea seems startling or unjust, to glance at the alternative. The only possible alternative to some system of equalized incomes is some form of payment by results or payment according to ability or worth. The difficulty is that it is becoming more and more impossible to find out what people "earn," even in the productive industries. It always has been impossible in many important services.

Roughly speaking, one may say that miners produce a certain value in coal in a given period, but they produce it in co-operation with many other kinds of workers. It is impossible to say that the transport-workers have earned this and the miners have earned that. All we can find out is that miners, transport-workers, engineers and other workers have between them produced and transported a quantity of coal, and that all the kinds of workers in the country added together have produced and transported a certain amount of goods. No one can measure the exact proportion of this service which each individual is responsible for. All we can try to do is to see that each one of these workers, as one of the whole, gets the benefit of all those things which he in common with thousands of others has produced.

While in certain industries rough adjustments have been made by paying so much for so many dozens of commodities produced, there are many kinds of work which cannot be estimated in this way. Who is going to judge

the comparative "worth" and "ability" of two teachers? Can we supply each teacher, each medical officer, each clerk, each shop-assistant with a committee of three persons who shall watch him closely all day long to decide on the "value" of the work he does? Unconsciously we have realized the hopelessness of attempting any such thing, and we have already adopted in many services standard incomes. We have to-day many people in receipt of the same fixed income who differ tremendously in ability, attention to work, keenness, and so on, and alterations in their incomes would not necessarily alter that. The quality of work is affected by many other factors, other than monetary reward.

As a matter of fact, there are many kinds of important work which are done without relation to income. The grocer who is a City Councillor receives his income because he is a grocer, but by far the most important service he renders to the community is his service as a City Councillor.

It is probable that as time goes on remuneration will tend to be made more in the form of public services and less in the form of money. This will make adjustments easier. The adoption of the idea of individual rather than "family" incomes will also make for a simpler method of payment. The "family" income, of course, is largely a myth; men's incomes are not based on the needs of their family, but upon the market value of their service. The question of child endowment is being fully discussed elsewhere, and we may content ourselves with remembering in passing that the idea is not altogether unknown.

Would any Government dream of issuing one ration or one shirt or one pair of boots to five brothers who joined the army because they were brothers? The idea is absurd. Separation allowances were based on the individual basis; poor law relief is allocated according to the number of individuals. The idea of an income for

each child in the family is merely an extension of a principle already partially adopted.

These adjustments of payment and of status are the interesting problems which confront our generation. They will entail detail work and a good deal of hard and clear thinking. They necessitate the shedding of many treasured beliefs and prejudices. They will not be settled in a day, but it will be half the battle if the ordinary citizen faces these problems calmly, reasons them out dispassionately, and refuses to allow himself to be frightened by them because they mean a readjustment of values.

If this passing mention of them will help anyone to meet the hollowed pumpkins which will jazz down the lanes in the coming elections with a steady pulse and a quiet mind, then these chapters will have served their purpose.

IV

OPPORTUNITIES

THE WOMAN VOTER.

THE granting of the franchise to women on equal terms with men will introduce a new difficulty to those responsible for propaganda, or it will at least develop and draw attention to the special needs of the woman voter. While it may be true to say that there is no particular kind of propaganda more suited to women than men, and that men and women are affected by the results of the present system in much the same way, it is also true that there are difficulties in approaching women which are not met with to the same extent in approaching men. There are still, unfortunately, many young women workers who are not organized into their Union, and they cannot therefore be as well approached through that channel; and even when women who are engaged in industry have been organized there still remains the vast mass of married women who leave their occupation and become housewives. The Socialist message has to be placed before large numbers of women who spend the greater part of their time in their own homes. In many cases they are unable to leave their homes for any length of time. It is essential that these women should be induced to attend political meetings. More and more women must learn to take their part in the administration of their town and country and in the ordinary work of the Labour movement. It is impera-

tive that throughout the whole country there should be adequate provision for the education of the numbers of women who will shortly receive political power for the first time. The time, place and manner of advertising these meetings is of vital importance if they are to be in any degree successful.

We can at once decide that the ordinary open-air meeting is useless for women. An occasional demonstration of a special kind is a different thing ; and women as well as men will attend, and have attended in the past, processions and open-air demonstrations suitable to certain occasions, but these are quite distinct from ordinary public meetings and lectures of an educational nature. The woman who has worked in her home all day does not stand at street corners at night. Perhaps when the value of open-air work is discussed, and we point, quite legitimately, to its achievements in the past, we forget that in the pioneer days women had no votes, and that the fact that woman is about to obtain a majority vote rather alters the situation. Indoor meetings are essential, and they must be near enough to the homes of the women to enable them to attend without leaving for too long a time. For this reason a series of small meetings is preferable to one large central meeting. The most suitable time depends entirely on the district, but it is because so often the suitable time for men is not the same as that for women that the special meetings have to be held ; otherwise, of course, the ideal thing would be to have joint meetings, so that men and women might learn to associate together as citizens in their political work.

The advertising of the meetings is a very important point. Large posters on hoardings are not seen by a great many women who do not go out frequently, and a casual distribution of a small bill is not much more satisfactory. The most perfect method of advertising is the door-to-door canvass by people who are provided

with a supply of attractive handbills. If there can be a photograph of the speaker on the handbill, so much the better. The personal word of invitation, as the bill is given to the woman of the house, is in itself a valuable form of propaganda. More can be accomplished by five hundred bills given in this way than with five thousand simply strewn about.

It is surely reasonable to suppose that many a woman who does not attend the ordinary political meeting, and does not even know that such meetings are held, would be inclined to attend a meeting held near her home at a convenient time if she had been personally invited to come and was sure that it was to be held in a comfortable room. Effective advertising is often more a question of trouble than of money, and the fact that so much trouble was taken to arrange the meeting and invite the audience immediately impresses favourably those women who come.

It may be argued that there is a difficulty in getting speakers to address so many meetings; that when a speaker is obtained, naturally it is necessary to get as large a hall as possible, so that a large number of people may hear him. It is perfectly true that the full-time speakers are few, and that the tremendous increase in the men and women who sit in Parliament or on various local bodies has increased the difficulty of getting speakers. Members of Parliament and members of local bodies cannot possibly give so much time to propaganda as they did when they had not been elected to these posts. At the same time it must be borne in mind that the object of these meetings will be to give as wide an education as possible. It is not necessary or desirable that all the speakers should be political speakers. There are in every town, and even village, people who have their special line. While men who work on local bodies are very busy, they might occasionally give a description of the administrative details of their work.

There are men with an intimate knowledge of Trade Union affairs who might be unaccustomed to addressing big meetings, but who could give valuable information to a group of women at an informal meeting. There are teachers who have specialized in some aspect of child study or who would give an occasional talk on some historical or literary subject.

There are also societies which are working exclusively for some particular reform who will arrange to send their official speakers into a district if good meetings can be arranged. It is very doubtful whether in the past we have made sufficient use of all the people who are not "speakers" in the ordinary sense of the word, but who are well informed on some particular subject and who are often exceedingly willing to give of their knowledge. Speakers of this type would very often prefer a small meeting, and could well be used.

The information they gave would be of a practical nature, and that is exactly what women want. It is not clear whether women are born more practical than men, but it is certain that the very nature of the work the housewife does tends to give her a very practical outlook. She is constantly being brought up short, as it were, by the nature of her duties as housewife and mother. If an office worker or a pit worker for any reason did not go to work for a week, the pit or office would be there on the following week. If a mother did not feed her baby for a week there would be no baby in the next week. There is no shift system; the duties of the woman with the care of young children are duties which constantly recur and have to be immediately dealt with; thus her reasoning processes tend to be shortened, and she learns not to make too many words about things. Short meetings of an educational nature, lasting perhaps an hour, where the inquiring woman, anxious to make the most of her political power, might learn something of the administration of her town, something of the laws

of her country, something of modern ideas on child welfare, on hygiene, on diet, or hear anything which will broaden her ideas of life, will do a great deal to prepare women to play their part in the coming years.

The prophecy that the advent of the woman voter would reduce political meetings to tea-parties has not been fulfilled; indeed, it is a remarkable fact that since the admission of women to privileges which have led them to attend election meetings in particular there have been more political issues discussed than ever before.

The despised tea-party, however, has its place. Women who always have to prepare their own meals as well as the meals for the family appreciate a tea that is prepared for them, and when there is an "outside" speaker in the district an afternoon devoted to an informal reception, where women may meet the stranger at the tea-table, is not by any means wasted. In fact, our old friend, the "tea and lecture," which has done such yeoman service in the past in building up the financial and social side of our churches, might with great benefit be more widely used in the Socialist movement. All who can look back to the days of their youth and remember the delightful functions which were such a feature of village chapel life, when there was a great tea, followed by a lecture by the visiting minister, will realize that these gatherings had a charm all their own. The idea can be adapted, and is, of course, in some places already adapted, to the special afternoon meetings for women. At a function of this kind a carefully prepared lecture on one of the pioneer women, who made the present position of women possible, is ideal.

THE CHILD.

Propaganda for children is one of the most vexed of all the many vexed questions now exercising our minds.

Most people find a difficulty in deciding how far it is just and desirable to instil any definite creed into a child during the most impressionable years of its life. On the other hand, children, in the ordinary course of their life, are constantly exposed to many undesirable influences and are in a hundred ways introduced to imperialistic and militarist ideas which make an impression and help to mould their character. While it is as impossible to "teach" Socialism as it is to "teach" Christianity, since both are more in the nature of a permeation than a dogma, it is possible and imperative that children should be given every opportunity of absorbing the atmosphere of internationalism and of the Socialist ideals generally. We do not want pre-eminently to make our children into politicians, still less into prigs, but we do want to help them to be citizens and to help them to get an idea of the community and their place in it.

Groups of young Socialists are now being formed inside the movement for the purpose of arranging courses of lectures suitable for young people, and there are, of course, Sunday-schools for younger children. There are other ways, however, in which quite young children may form part of the Socialist movement and absorb its atmosphere. The formation of children's choirs is a feature in some parts of the country. One very well-organized branch has formed children into several classes. A room is hired and a teacher engaged, and simple dances are taught, a special feature being costume dances representing all nations. These children appear in the peace demonstrations and at social functions, and naturally, as they grow older, become a part of the adult movement. At the annual bazaar they furnish a stall by their own work. The money and time spent on their training has borne good fruit, and there is every reason to believe that in years to come these children will develop into Socialist workers, able

to carry on the necessary work of the movement in their town, although they have not received much actual stereotyped economic or political teaching.

In large towns especially, where opportunities for social intercourse between young people are restricted, it is of great importance that our children should have every opportunity of finding recreation in some organization within the movement. It is not desirable that they should be left to organizations of a semi-militarist character. The rambling clubs, if well led, should be as healthful and informative as the boy scouts' outings. Dances and games arranged by a competent person should prove as attractive as the activities of the girl guides.

A well-managed dramatic society, which would regularly rehearse and produce carefully chosen plays, would be of incalculable benefit to children, both from the ordinary educational standpoint and also, when plays of a certain nature are performed, from the standpoint of propaganda. While these activities are part of the work of the most successful districts from a Socialist point of view, they should be much more general than they are, and it is essential that the training of youth should receive the attention of every group of Socialists, however small. There may well be found in most districts people who could give as their special contribution to the Socialist movement their talent for leading and teaching children, so that, as the older generation passes, a well-informed and intelligent generation may be ready to take its place.

THE COUNTRYSIDE.

The success of Socialism in the large industrial areas has been phenomenal, but the countryside has to be won before any Socialist Government can claim to represent the nation as a whole.

Transport difficulties at once leap to one's mind.

The scattered villages represent a very real problem. Cycles are a help, and there is one case known to the writer in which an enthusiastic member of a town branch takes out a band of his friends every Saturday in his business motor-lorry to some near-by village.

In this way every village round is visited several times during the year. It is only by shepherding the villages that they can be reached. It is very necessary that they should be reached just now. The general awakening of interest is felt in the rural areas, and the ground is ready for seed to be sown. It is at this critical time that the Socialist should seize the opportunity presented. In another few years other seed may have been sown, and there will not be the same chance to "get in first." The time has arrived when large societies which have been in the habit of holding large central meetings must extend their activities and take out their speakers to new and untouched areas.

There are cases where branches do a good deal of missionary work and spend their funds generously in supplying speakers and arranging meetings in villages which have been left severely alone in the past, but there will have to be a great increase in this work before the countryside can be covered. It is not at all necessary to use exclusively propagandists who are experts on agricultural problems. While the Socialist policy for agriculture is of special interest, it does not follow that nothing else is needed. It is not simply a question of getting the agricultural labourer to vote Socialist; it is a question of making him a Socialist, and it would be disastrous if he did not think of himself as one of the community. The cleavage which too often exists between the town and country labourer must be bridged; and while there are special problems peculiar to both, there is no special brand of Socialism for any particular class of worker. It is essential that both town and country worker should be encouraged to look at the

whole problem, and not at the corner of it which happens to be uppermost in any one area.

A short series of meetings, if possible addressed by the same speaker, held systematically in a village would be most helpful, and bring better results than a spasmodic meeting or two.

It may mean a certain financial sacrifice for some time to concentrate on the rural areas rather than on the huge cities, but there will certainly be a reward in the added support and interest received. Events are much talked of in tiny villages, and a very small meeting which would be the topic of conversation for weeks to come might be doing more real propaganda than a crowded meeting in a big hall in a town where such meetings have been held for years, and where the same people go week after week, very much as the sermon-tasters used to attend certain Scotch kirks.

The fresh virgin soil would be a welcome change to a speaker after the somewhat *blasé* audiences which assemble in some well-worked districts.

The question of the countryside suggests the open-air meeting. There is no doubt that there are places where the open-air meeting is the only possible thing. Open-air meetings, when carefully planned, may be excellent. An open-air meeting held under suitable conditions, or held because there is no hall available, is a very different thing from the open-air meeting which is arranged because it is less trouble and expense to let the speaker get up where people (and incidentally two or three tram-lines) meet and draw the crowd as it passes by. This type of meeting is an abomination from the point of view of serious political work, though the spectacle of the hapless propagandist fighting a game and losing fight against trams, buses, motor-bicycles and sundry other noises may have a sporting interest for the casual onlooker.

When, however, it is necessary to have an open-air

meeting, it should be as carefully arranged, if not more carefully, than the indoor meeting. The spot chosen should be as far away from traffic as possible, and the village should be canvassed beforehand, twice if it could be managed. If the advertising is done in advance, there is no reason why there should not be as good an audience as would assemble indoors. The more people who accompany the speaker the better, as the crowd of visitors encourages the villagers, who may be afraid to become too conspicuous, to join in.

There is no doubt that, while it may be possible in some cases to get the use of a small hall or vestry, there will be many places in which open-air meetings will have to be held for some time to come. Therefore it is well to organize these meetings as carefully as possible and make the very best use of them.

THE INQUIRERS.

While the coming of the franchise to women brings a unique opportunity, there is another very special opportunity for the propagandist at this time. It is certainly not true to say of Socialism that "he who is not with us is against us."

The view that everyone who does not throw himself into the Socialist movement deliberately refrains from so doing because of some fear of consequences to himself cannot be held for a moment. There are many hundreds of people who have never in their lives realized the importance of politics, and who, in fact, rather prided themselves on keeping clear of politics, who have been awakened to the danger of this point of view by the terrible results of the careless policies, especially the foreign policies, which have been carried on in their name. These people are honestly anxious to begin to use their political power in the best way, and wish to take their share of the responsibility of government.

They naturally wish to be sure that they join the party which has the best programme, and they are saying to the Socialist: "We want to know your scheme; we want to know why you think your plan will work." They have every right to ask for the fullest possible information, and it is the duty of the adherents of Socialism to put their case forward in the best and fairest way.

There are also vast numbers of those who have been adherents of one of the older parties who have been shocked at the events of the last ten years. They are honest enough to be willing to change their party if they are convinced that the party they have trusted in the past is no longer able to express their highest ideals. Naturally they want to be very sure that they do not jump out of the frying-pan into the fire. They have preconceived ideas; they have prejudices, often quite legitimate ones. They are attracted to the new party. They were impressed by the amazing way in which the new little party behaved when suddenly called upon to become the official Opposition. The fact that a Labour Government has been able to carry on the ordinary work of the country has been a revelation. They are on the brink, all but certain that the time has come when they should also join the Socialist movement. Nothing has been more striking during the last two years than the number of people who have attended a Socialist meeting for the first time in their lives.

Everything possible should be done to enable people belonging to both these categories to get a fair idea of our work, and there never was a time when it was more important, not only to get the best possible type of propaganda, but to arrange meetings so that the new people visiting them may receive a favourable impression.

It is a thousand pities if any "all-buts" should be discouraged from following up their study of the Socialist

movement by having an unfortunate experience at some of the first meetings they venture to attend.

There is said to be a Providence which watches over drunken men and children ; there is certainly no special Providence which watches over Socialist meetings and saves the organizers of them from the consequences of their carelessness or mistakes.

It may generally be taken that the more there is put into a meeting the more will be got out of it.

May we imagine the man hesitating on the brink, having heard a great deal of Socialism and desiring to know more, attending very gingerly a meeting which happens to be held in his neighbourhood ?

May we imagine two possible meetings he might attend ?

Meeting 1.

Scene : A hall.

Time : 6.45.

Speaker arrives, and finds caretaker pottering about. Elicits information that he has not made a mistake, but there is to be a meeting in that hall. Feeling rather damped, sits down and waits.

6.55.—Few people have straggled in, among them the organizer of meeting. Thinks that it is a bad night for a meeting, and volunteers information that the bills were ordered late and were not up till a day or so before meeting. Also states that he is not quite sure whether Mr. Smith will take the chair or not. Thinks that there have been no *New Leaders* ordered.

7.5.—Shy and unwilling chairman commandeered under vigorous protest. Hasty agenda made on back of envelope.

7.10.—Chairman apologizes for his existence, and calls on thoroughly demoralized and wretched speaker to deliver lecture, which speaker, with a heroism worthy of the Victoria Cross, attempts to do.

Meeting 2.

Scene : Another hall.

Time : 6.45.

Speaker arrives and is warmly greeted by band of officials with badges up. Literature on table ; stewards showing people into seats as they arrive. Free leaflets on seats. Secretary, bursting with pride, describes special advertising which he is sure will bring a good audience. Women members further explain that in order to ensure financial success a whist drive had been held the previous week, and that there are two or three pounds in hand to help with expenses of meeting. Chairman produces neat agenda from pocket, where it has been cherished.

7.0.—Chairman, speaker, and one or two officials file on to platform.

7-7.10.—Chairman delivers speech which lets speaker into secret of the general feeling of the audience by skilful reference to local affairs.

7.15.—Speaker, feeling welcomed and happy, does his best.

It does not need a great deal of imagination to realize the kind of impression which would be made on a new-comer at each of these meetings. There is nothing more fatal to any cause than for its public functions to have a casual, unprepared air. It is not so much a question of money. To choose a suitable and experienced chairman, with a wide knowledge of local events, to arrange the platform carefully, to get a canvass prior to the meeting, to get stewards and get them there early, to get down literature is a question of trouble and minute attention to detail. There are people whose special genius is a capacity for stage management. These people should be chosen to organize meetings and given every facility. The secret of success is to find the

special gift of each person and let him work along his own line. The man who can think out new ways of advertising, the man who can take a collection properly, the man who has a *flair* for drawing up bills, the man of the one talent who will patiently canvass a district, the man who can sell literature, the man who can make a good chairman's speech—each one of these is of immense value in helping to make propaganda meetings successful. Can we complain if some earnest seeker, chilled by a first unfortunate experience, says: "These people say they can run the world and they cannot run a meeting"?

It is worth much toilsome detail work to ensure a thoroughly well-arranged, attractive, helpful meeting. An organizer capable of the minute attention to detail which is so necessary is worth untold gold, and very often the best man for the work will be found to be a woman.

Of course, the form of the meeting is no more important, after all, than the matter. The preparation of a syllabus is a matter for very careful consideration. It is not always made a rule to draw up a programme for the season in advance. Where this is not done it is a weakness.

For many years debating societies, P.S.A.s and kindred organizations have made a practice of preparing a programme in advance, and give a very full and varied course. A course of lectures on some specific subject is the finest basis for a series of Socialist meetings, but there are valuable forms of meeting other than the set lecture or political speech. Debates are extremely valuable, and could be used more freely as a means of political education. They usually attract a large audience, they have the advantage of threshing out a question from all points of view, and they are helpful in training those who take part to think and speak accurately.

A very good syllabus for a winter's season would be :—
A lecture once a fortnight, consisting, say, of three sets

of four lectures each by experts on subjects of vital importance, the alternate weeks to be filled in with debates, lectures of an educational nature not directly connected with politics, performances of plays by the dramatic society (which should be formed in *every* Socialist branch, wherever found), musical evenings and socials, and one or two very large political meetings held in outside halls, at which prominent men in the political world would make public pronouncements of our policy on some urgent question.

It may be urged that such a syllabus can only be hoped for in the very large towns, and it is true that some places are much more difficult than others ; but it is well to be certain that even in small places all resources are tapped. If organizers of meetings have an idea that the one way of getting propaganda done is to get a famous Member of Parliament down each week, then they will rightly conclude that their little village or town must go without propaganda ; but it is not the only way of getting it done. As has been suggested in the section on "The Woman Voter," there are people who have their own line and who can give useful information on many valuable topics who can be pressed into service. Villages and towns can exchange local speakers, and if the worst comes to the worst, and it is really impossible to get speakers to address meetings, there are the hundreds of valuable books dealing with every aspect of the problems of to-day, one of which could be used as a text-book for a series of discussions.

Anyone who has been struck, however, in going up and down the country, with the very excellent programmes which little societies of various kinds are able to draw up, even in quite tiny places, will agree that there are often good lecturers at hand who are not used as they might be by the Socialist organizer responsible for the propaganda of the district.

The fields are indeed white to the harvest, and it is

not only the work of the great leaders of the movement which counts, magnificent as it is ; there is a contribution which can only be made by thousands of obscure people, who are prepared to do the necessary detail work, and do it thoroughly. Our movement has been built up by the quiet devotion of its members ; it can only be consolidated and brought to further perfection by a continuance of that spirit of service-giving which brought it to birth. We are proud of our past ; it behoves us to be worthy of it.

